

Remarks

Claims 1-48, 52, and 59 were previously canceled. Claims 49-51, 53, 61, 63, and 70-72 have been amended and new claims 79-89 have been added. Claims 49-51, 53-58, and 60-89 are currently pending in the instant application.

Examiner Interview

Applicants thank Examiner Poinvil for discussing the outstanding Office Action, the Melby reference, and various pending and proposed claims during a telephonic interview with Applicants' undersigned representative and Jason Kraus on August 26, 2008. Applicants also thank the Examiner for recognizing the patentability of independent claims 49, 70, and 81 (and thus the claims depending from those independent claims as well) as set forth herein.

As a result, Applicants have amended claims 49 and 70 and drafted 81 as discussed during the phone conference.

§ 102 and § 103 Rejections

Claims 49-51, 53-58 and 60-78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,952,680 ("Melby"). Further, claims 57-60 and 71-78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Melby. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Claim 49 Is Not Anticipated by or Rendered Obvious by Melby

Claim 49, as amended, is directed to a system for managing a plurality of assets comprising, in part, "defined limited access levels programmed into the central processor, wherein limited access of the user to a predetermined type of asset information is determined based on the defined limited access levels and a configurable user profile of the user."

It is respectfully submitted that Melby fails to teach, suggest, or provide any reason for a system having defined limited access levels having "limited access of the user to a predetermined type of asset information." Instead, Melby discloses a computer based system that, according to the Abstract, "automatically gathers, analyzes, and delivers information relating to the procurement and utilization of a plurality of . . . assets." As disclosed in the Melby reference, the Melby system does not provide for limited access of a user to a predetermined type of asset information. That is, any user that accesses the Melby system has access to – and can even alter – all the information in the system. In fact, it is noted that "[w]hile it may not be appropriate for a supplier . . . to be able to alter information in database 78, the ability to quickly and accurately collect information concerning warranty obligations and the like is of particular benefit to *all of*

the parties.” See Melby, col. 12, ll. 41-45 (emphasis added). Thus, Melby discloses that all the information in the Melby system is available to all users. As such, Melby fails to teach, suggest, or provide any reason for limited access of a user to a predetermined type of asset information as required in claim 49.

Claims Depending from Claim 49 Are Patentable

Because claims 50-51, 53-58, and 60-69 depend directly or indirectly from claim 49 and incorporate all the limitations of claim 49, the above argument obviates the basis for these grounds of rejection. Thus, claims 50-51, 53-58, and 60-69 are not anticipated by, or rendered obvious by, Melby. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In addition, new dependent claim 79 depends directly from claim 49 and incorporates all the limitations of claim 49. Thus, claim 79 is patentable over Melby for the reasons discussed above.

Claim 70 Is Not Anticipated by or Rendered Obvious by Melby

Claim 70, as amended, is directed to a system for managing a plurality of assets comprising, in part, both a first limited access level “comprising access to a first predetermined subset of information” and a second limited access level “comprising access to a second predetermined subset of information.”

It is respectfully submitted that Melby fails to teach, suggest, or provide any reason for a system having first and second limited access levels comprising access to first and second predetermined subsets of information, respectively. Instead, as discussed above, Melby discloses that all the information in the Melby system is available to all users. As such, Melby fails to teach, suggest, or provide any reason for first and second limited access levels as required in claim 70.

Claims Depending from Claim 70 Are Patentable

Because claims 71-78 depend directly or indirectly from claim 49 and incorporate all the limitations of claim 49, the above argument obviates the basis for these grounds of rejection. Thus, claims 71-78 are not anticipated by, or rendered obvious by, Melby. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

In addition, new dependent claim 80 depends directly from claim 70 and incorporates all the limitations of claim 70. Thus, claim 80 is patentable over Melby for the reasons discussed above.

New Claims

It is respectfully submitted that new claims 81-89 are also patentable over Melby.

Independent claim 81 is directed to a system comprising, in part, at least one predetermined limited user access level “configured to restrict access of the user to a predetermined subset of asset information based on a configurable user profile of the user.”

It is respectfully submitted that Melby fails to teach, suggest, or provide any reason for a system having at least one predetermined limited user access level “configured to restrict access of the user to a predetermined subset of asset information based on a configurable user profile of the user.” Instead, as discussed above, Melby discloses that all the information in the Melby system is available to all users. As such, Melby fails to teach, suggest, or provide any reason for the at least one predetermined limited user access level as required in claim 81.

Because claims 82-89 depend directly or indirectly from claim 81 and incorporate all the limitations of claim 81, claims 82-89 are patentable over Melby.

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Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 49-51, 53-58, and 60-89 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims is respectfully requested. Please direct any calls in connection with this application to the undersigned at (612) 766-8739.

This response is being filed on or before September 23, 2008, along with a Petition for a Two Month Extension and an appropriate fee, thus making it a timely response. Applicants believe no additional fees are due. However, the Commissioner is authorized to charge fees which may be required, including extension fees, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-0029.

Respectfully submitted,
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